

### ISCA Independence Day Parade by Ali Breen

It's time to break out the red, white and blue to star-spangle your bikes and strollers and wagons. Even some patriotic (well-behaved) pups have joined in on the fun. The annual Indian Spring Independence Day parade will wind through our neighborhood on Sunday, June 30. The parade will start at the Rec Center (9717 Lawndale Drive) at Noon.

After the parade, we will reconvene at the Rec Center where kids of all ages will enjoy refreshing treats and fun games. This is a wonderful occassion to celebrate our patriotism and our wonderful neighborhood.

Please contact Ali Breen (ali@vonunderfoot.com or 202-321-8447) or Amy Shawer (ada99@mac.com) if you will volunteer for the event. We could use help in planning, set-up / clean-up, even leading the kids in an activity when we land at the Rec Center.

See you there!

# **National Night Out in ISCA**

by Joyce Stocker

Once again, citizens from Indian Spring will participate in National Night Out. The event will be held on Tuesday, August 6 at the Indian Spring Recreation Center on Lawndale Drive. The police will arrive around 6:45 p.m. and will only be here for about 10 minutes, so please come at 6:30 p.m.

This national campaign, which is now in its ninth year, has four main goals:

- 1. Heighten crime- and drug-prevention awareness
- Generate support for, and participation in, local anti-crime efforts
- 3. Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships
- 4. Send a message to criminals that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

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# Indian Spring Citizens Association

### **Membership Application and Renewal**

Dues are \$15 per household ● Please Join or Renew Now ● Dues cover 12 months from receipt Send Check to ISCA ● P.O. Box 3724 ● Silver Spring, MD 20918-3724

Or drop off at 200 East Indian Spring Drive (c/o Phyllis Zusman, Membership Chair) or use Paypal at iscaonline.com

Name(s):	Phone: ( ) Date: / /
Street Address:	Silver Spring, MD 20901
Email:	

If you are not sure of your membership status you can e-mail Phyllis, fzusman@erols.com or call, 301-587-9063, and she will give you the answer.

## **Save the Date!**

June 30 Independence Day parade

August 6 National Night Out

### **ISCA Officers**

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Evan Glass president@iscaonline.com

Vice President, Social Committee Christina Taylor

Vice President, Civic Affairs Eileen Fisher

Secretary vacant

Treasurer Elizabeth Magin

# Neighborhood Watch Organizer

Tony Hausner Joyce Stocker

#### Website Organizers

Tony Hausner Elfalem Alemu

**Membership Chair** Phyllis Zusman

Newsletter Coordinator

Tony Hausner thausner@gmail.com

Copy Editor Elizabeth Magin

**Layout Coordinators** 

Ali Breen Audrey Cowgill

#### **Board Members**

Bob Tiller
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Rob Levy
Jill Ortman-Fouse,
past president

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**; (this section for announcements about new neighbors, births, deaths, weddings, graduations, etc. Send announcements to thausner@gmail.com)

Migiel "Giel" Xanten lived on 10 E. Granville drive since 1974. After an almost 10 year battle with Alzheimer's she passed away on April 23. She was an employee of Montgomery County for 12 years and is missed terribly by her 4 children, 2 grandchildren and younger brother. Submitted by Jennifer Xanten

### National Night Out cont. from page 1 by Joyce Stocker

Last year's campaign involved citizens, law enforcement officials, civic groups, businesses, and neighborhood organizations. More than 10,000 communities participated from all 50 states. In all, more than 34 million people observed this night.

In our own community, police officers met with residents and reviewed facts about car thefts, thefts from cars, and home break-ins. Information on security systems and guard dogs was shared. Despite the seriousness of the topics, the night ended on a sweet note as ISCA provided ice cream to all who attended.

Please come, meet your neighbors, provide a show of solidarity to your community and the police, and let criminals know that we are united in our efforts to reduce crime in our neighborhood.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Please contact me at comit89@aol.com. 🖎

# **Crime Report**

from Joyce Stocker

In the last 30 days, the following crime was the only one reported to the Montgomery County Police Dept from the Indian Spring community:

5/3 300 block of Brewster Court theft from vehicle

Please call the police and report to listserv any suspicious incident.

WEB SITE: iscaonline.com (includes services recommendations and photo albums). We are also on Facebook under Indian Spring Citizens Association.

EMAIL GROUP (LISTSERV): to subscribe: iscaonline-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to send messages: iscaonline@yahoogroups.com

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# Solar panels at the Levy household by Robert Levy

Sunlight is the most abundant source of potential energy on the planet. Creating solar power by converting sunlight into electricity lowers emissions from electricity generation and decreases long-term energy costs. These benefits are obvious, but except for California, rooftop solar systems are still quite rare in the United States. This explains why our treeless, South-facing roof on Granville has received a lot of attention from our Indian Spring neighbors. Our roof has been producing electricity for four months now. We are happy so far. We paid zero up front, contribute viable, green energy, and it does not intrude in the daily life of our busy family. In fact, we are saving money as well.

A quick browse of Wikipedia shows that U.S. solar cell production is half of what it is in Europe, and barely 15% of what is produced in China. It is interesting because most of Europe is 10° to the north and cloudier than the U.S. Even Maryland has sufficient sun-hours to make solar power viable. Why is the U.S. so behind? Quite frankly, the economics suck. In the U.S., solar systems are expensive to purchase, install and maintain. Even with all the rebates, tax credits, and other incentives, it would still cost ~\$20K to purchase and install panels on a roof in our neighborhood. Sadly, much of that upfront cost is related to cumbersome county, state and federal permitting, but that's another story. It is true that in 7-10 years a household could break even and actually begin to have free electricity, but upfront costs are still steep. At least this was too steep for us.

ISCA to the rescue! A year ago (last May), ISCA invited representatives from solar power energy companies to one of the bi-monthly meetings. Here, I learned about the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), which is essentially a long-term lease (e.g. 20 years) of solar equipment. Basically, instead of a homeowner owning the panels and the energy produced, a company owns the panels, but charges the homeowner for the energy produced. Instead of the owner having to fight the government bureaucracy to obtain the rebates/credits/incentives, the company keeps them but theoretically charges the homeowner a reasonable price for the energy (\$ per kWh) produced. In this case, a reasonable price is something that is less than that which is charged by our neighborhood electricity carrier (i.e. PEPCO). In the long run, we won't be saving as much money as if buying the system

outright, but clean electricity, low (\$0) upfront cost, and overall savings seemed like a no-lose situation. After a lot of research (comparing companies, packages, payment structures, etc), we decided to go with Solar City or "SC" (http://solarcity.com), a California-based company with a franchise in Maryland.

Before we signed up, SC made it extremely clear that there were caveats to solar power and PPAs. I am assuming that like many ISCA residents, we were hoping to somehow get "off the grid" and not suffer future PEPCO power outages. Not true. The panels on the roof are just one more source of power passing through the grid. So, when the main lines go down, the roof is "turned off" for safety, and we would be in the dark like everyone else. We had other issues and concerns, like safety, maintenance, roof upgrades, the 20-year lease issue, long-term price fluctuations, and other items too numerous to explain here, but most were answered satisfactorily.

What's on our roof? SC first evaluated our roof (surface area, directional exposure) using Google Earth. The original plan was for 22 panels, but after SC performed a site visit, they found shading by our chimney and overhead wires that reduced the viable space to 18 panels. Due to the necessary reduction from 22 to 18 panels, the visual symmetry on our roof is not as we would have preferred, but overall not too intrusive looking. The final result is a 4.32 kW system (eighteen 240W panels). In addition to the panels on the roof, the system includes an inverter (DC to AC), an updated PEPCO meter (can run backwards), and modifications to our home's electrical panel.

How does the lease work? Essentially, during daylight hours, any electricity produced on the roof feeds directly into the PEPCO power grid, which makes the PEPCO meter run backwards! According to last year's PEPCO bills, our household used 12,600 kWh/year at 14.7¢/kWh (average payment of \$154.34/month). Under normal Silver Spring sun/cloud conditions, the 4.32 kW system is expected to produce 6181 kWh per year (half of our total need). SC charges 10.07¢/kWh (or 4¢ less than PEPCO). The 6181 kWh estimate is broken into twelve equal (monthly) portions, so at 10.07¢/kWh, our "rent" is \$51.87 per/month. Therefore, instead of \$154.35/month to PEPCO, we are paying \$51.87 every month to SC, and an average of \$78.63/month to PEPCO. Over the course of a year, we should save an average of \$20/month.

cont. on page 6

### Solar panels cont. from page 5 by Robery Levy

The fine print is that there is a 3.9% increase each year, so that by the end of 20 years, we will be paying double at  $20.8 \phi/k$ Wh. The gamble is that PEPCO also would be raising prices by an average of 3.9%/year, so we would still be saving money.

well as historical production. This morning (May 23), I could see that our roof has produced over 2100 kWh this year. Also, I can monitor production by month, week or day. For example, the May 1st screenshot (graph below) shows that except for some morning clouds, it was a near perfect day for solar production! Nearly 30 kWh was produced on that day.

cont. on page 7

How was installation? After signing the PPA in early November 2012, SC took a few weeks to create final engineering plans, which were then submitted to the county for permitting and other paper work. By early December, the permits were in place, and the system bracing on the roof. Then there was a county inspection and a utility inspection. After more permits and a "PEPCO inter-connection" application, we finally flicked the switch on Jan 24, 2013!

Solar City provides software and a web page to monitor current as



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Digiprint does a great job of printing the ISCA newsletters!

Editor's note: As noted previously, we will be including interviews with noted members of our community. We would welcome suggestions for further persons to be interviewed, please send to thausner@gmail.com, 301-587-6943 and we would love to have students to serve as reporters for student service credits.



### Solar panels cont. from page 6 by Robery Levy

Are we really saving money? This photo pair, taken a few hours apart on May 1st, confirmed that our PEPCO meter did run backwards (from 1745 to 1742)! Our recent May 19 PEPCO bill was \$30.63, as compared to \$99 for the same month in 2012 and \$110 in 2011. Even when adding the \$51.87 to SC, we still are saving money. Hopefully we will see even more benefit in the summer. Are we happy (so far)? I believe the answer is yes. We paid zero up front, have viable, green energy production

on our roof, and it does not intrude in the daily life of our busy family. In fact, we are saving money as well. Many Indian Spring houses have South-facing views, which are optimal for solar power. I understand that even West or East facing roofs can be viable as well. With the recent loss of tree cover in our neighborhood (that some blame at least partially on PEPCO), many houses (like ours) are baking anyway. We might as well take advantage.

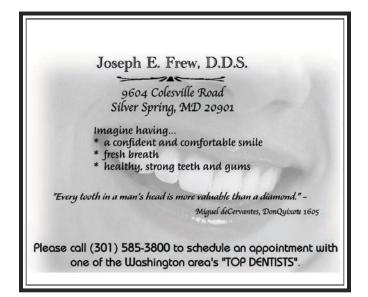
Come drive by 205 Granville and see what it looks like. For more information on our experience (including all the technical information) we are willing to answer questions.

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Editor's Note: Other homes in ISCA have also installed solar panels. Most of them have purchased in contrast to Rob Levy who is leasing.

Editor's note: The newsletter is printed in black and white to save on costs. A color version is online at iscaonline.com; so if you want to see any photos, ads, etc. in color, we recommend going online.



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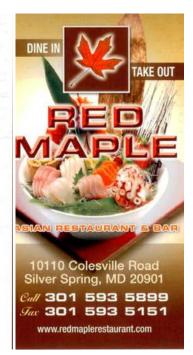
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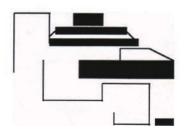
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